

## Events Strategy for Chichester District 2020-2025

### Foreword

Chichester District Council has recognised the benefits of establishing a coordinated approach to a programme of events, acknowledging the opportunities associated with hosting events and the benefits these can bring to the district.

The events strategy has been developed to embrace opportunities and raise the profile of the district in order to become a leading visitor destination.

It recognises that the district has a varied landscape with urban, coastal and rural areas, and comes with infrastructure limitations. The aspirations within the strategy are sympathetic to the district's uniqueness and aims to achieve collaboration in forming a coordinated approach to a programme of events.

The strategy is the first of its kind from Chichester District Council and will be used to shape the future of events within the district, and is supported by a public consultation.

It sets out the need to be open for business and ready for events to organisers, but also highlights the opportunity for the council to produce our own range of events to provide an attraction for our local community and economy.

*Cllr Alan Sutton*

*Cabinet Member for Housing Communications, Licensing and Events*

### Vision

To establish a year round programme of events that meets the needs of the District's communities. Promoting Chichester District in order to raise the profile of the area, and positively contribute to the local economy and cultural experience, creating a destination experience in line with council priorities and Visions.

### About this Strategy

Events can provide significant benefits for a host destination and are acknowledged as opportunities to stimulate tourism and economic growth by showcasing the destination and attracting visitors from outside the area. A positive experience for an attendee at an event can prompt them to become a destination advocate.

Events can help to boost the local economy by encouraging tourist visits and local people to stay local; raise the profile of an area, highlighting the unique features and benefits; enhance community pride and togetherness.

The importance of events has been recognised by Parliament with the recent confirmed continuation of the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for the UK Events Industry, the purpose for which is to; represent the UK events industry in Parliament, highlight the value of the industry, engage with politicians and industry representatives and to ensure that the UK benefits from the success of large internationally prominent events. The APPG advocates that events provide a mechanism for attracting visitors without the need for expensive, tourism-based investment and infrastructure.

The Visit Chichester Destination Management Plan 2019-2023 (DMP) also highlights the benefits of events, promoting events-based tourism as a source of delivering local economic and social benefits that outweigh their cost.

The DMP suggests it is important for the district to build a strong destination brand, which includes creating an 'experience' through events and activities, giving people a specific reason to visit an area. The DMP specifically recognises music tourism as an opportunity to build the district offer via events, and sees events generally as a tourism product.

Local authorities are also recognising the strategic importance of major events and plan accordingly to attract investment if required, they understand that events act as a platform for transformation of their area and actively promote and enhance their 'offer'.

"Festivals organised and/or funded by local government and participated in and attended by the local community can be seen as communications vehicles, and viewing them as such helps to clarify their objectives and, therefore, their potential "feel good" factor in the community, through celebration and entertainment, to promoting pride in the region, acceptance of cultures, community cohesion, a feeling of belonging, and more active citizenship (*Derrett, 2002; Quinn, 2005; Richards & Wilson, 2004*).

A robust approach to events in the Chichester District is important as it will:

- Benefit the economy
- Make the district a more attractive place to live, work and visit
- Support the longer term developments of the district

## **Background**

The Chichester Vision is an inspirational document outlining the issues and aspirations of the city and its community, the content of the document was produced from a number of partners and extensive community engagement. One of the areas highlighted from the Vision was the need and desire to establish a year round programme of widely publicised events, festivals and activities, in order to create a leading visitor destination.

The Towns Visions, including Petworth, Midhurst and Selsey also all highlight the importance of events for local economies and communities, the findings of which are from surveys and workshops in the local communities.

Chichester District currently plays host to several events, the most recognised are those that take place at Goodwood, namely Festival of Speed, Revival and the Qatar Goodwood Festival. Similarly other established venues in the district are also well known for the large, well-attended event such as the Gold Cup at Cowdray Park.

CDC owns twelve areas of open recreational spaces where several events take place each year. Depending on the size and nature of the event some may require licenses, and a Safety Advisory Group (SAG) both of which are managed by the Licensing & Events Team. In addition to the regular sporting fixtures approximately 21 events took place in 2019 on council owned land, the most common themes being food or music, and all of which were managed by external operators. Whilst there are already many valuable events in the district, there is potential to host more.

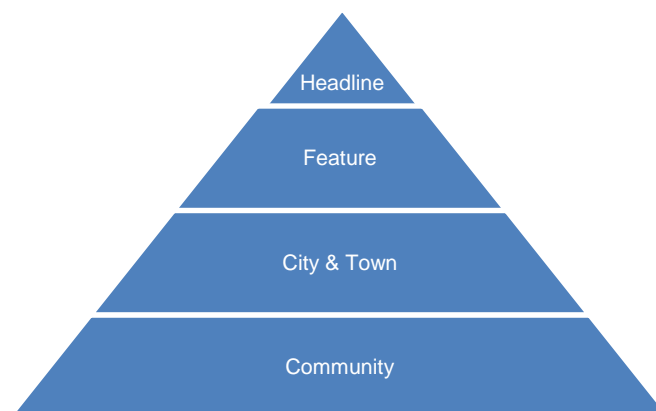
There is also an opportunity for CDC to manage events, expanding on the success of the 2019 Summer Street Party, organised by CDC with support from Chichester BID, the aim of which was to create an exciting summer evening event to attract footfall into the centre and to help support the retail offer, the event was a great success and there is potential for it to grow.

The town councils within the district also host successful events, including the Midhurst Christmas Festival and Summer Carnival procession, the Petworth Christmas event and regular farmers markets and Selsey's Screen on the Green and Selsey Festival.

Whilst Chichester district already has a great calendar of events, there is potential for there to be a more joint up approach across the district, with the town councils and CDC coming together regularly to discuss ways in which the events benefit the district as a whole.

We are at a time where there is an opportunity to bring a distinctive new edge to the district, enhancing the attractiveness of the areas assets, generating an appealing new buzz about the district, ensuring people of all ages feel it's 'theirs'.

To bring focus to the priorities and aims proposed later on in the strategy, events have been categorised as follows:



### Headline Events

Headline Events are high profile, large scale events with the purpose being to attract visitors from across the UK, to encourage overnight stays and increase dwell time, and to promote and showcase the district to a large audience.

### Feature Events

Medium to large scale events, generally hosted on CDC land and require authorisation under the Licensing Act 2003 and other statutory regulations, and will also require a Safety

Advisory Group(SAG). They tend to have a theme (i.e. food, music, arts, sporting) and can be recurring or one-off, and attract visitors from the district and surrounding counties.

### City & Town Events & Markets

City and Town based events which are predominantly aimed at local residents and those from surrounding counties. The events encourage a sense of community, showcase and celebrate the location and promote the districts cities and towns as community hubs and help to create a destination experience.

### Community Events

Community events are organised and attended by local communities, including charitable events, primarily neighbourhood focused.

## **Consultation Results**

A public consultation was undertaken between May and July 2019, 296 responses were received to the questionnaire, some respondents said their views represents more than one person, with this taken into account the views of 1,613 individuals were recorded. Another consultation was also conducted with Chichester College, whereby 250 16-18 olds responses were recorded.

- The majority of respondents do not currently attend events in the district, those that do tend to be markets or open air film events. The main reasons for people not attending events is because they are unaware of what's on, or there is not enough interest for them to attend and the most common way people hear about events in the district is through social media or word of mouth
- Respondents feel as there are currently not enough events in the district, music and food and drink were the two most popular types of events people would like to see more of.
- Parks/green spaces and city and town centres were the most popular places people would like to see more events, with less wanting more events in the country or in coastal areas.
- Low cost came out as the as the main factor to attract people to events, and almost half of respondents would like to see more markets across the district specifically food and craft markets.

Evaluation results from the 2019 Chichester Summer Street Party demonstrated that a high proportion of visitors came into the city centre that day especially for the event, demonstrating how events can be used to promote or enhance an area. A large number of those visiting said that they visited High St businesses as a result of attending, and nearly all of those asked would recommend the event to family and friends and would like to see more events like this in Chichester.

Whilst the over-riding theme of the results is for more events throughout the district, it is important for CDC to engage in and where possible encourage events that complement and bring value to the district. It is also important to consider the infrastructure needs of an event and if the particular host area is able to suitably accommodate that event.

The district has its challenges when it comes to hosting events, the following needs to be recognised in order to manage expectations:

- CDC Hire of Land
  - o We have limited number of suitable spaces for events to take place, with the majority of these being in Chichester City Centre
  - o The largest spaces and most suitable spaces are close to residents and a major tourist destination, both of which impact the number, size and type of events we are able to host
- Chichester City Centre
  - o Limited performance space available for large gatherings
  - o Narrow city centre streets don't provide an ideal setting for events
- Restrictions
  - o Strict planning restrictions in the district
  - o The district consists of a large area of natural beauty
  - o Transport links, limited especially to smaller towns

Early consultation is also key for larger events to be a success, keeping all partners/stakeholders informed and involved consistently throughout the whole event process, minimising any potential issues or ramifications further down the line.

## **Our Priorities**

### **Priority 1: Chichester District is a place that welcomes events**

Actively promote the district as an events destination and welcoming host, and attract new events. Supporting event organisers, and forming strong relationships so there is a mutual understanding of what is expected and what is needed to hold a successful event in the district.

#### **Aims:**

- 1.1 Work collaboratively with partners to promote the district as an events destination.
- 1.2 Promote the district to potential event organisers; develop relationships with other councils and event organisers to promote the district.
- 1.3 Ensure information is up to date and readily available for organisers, including a dedicated events page on the CDC website and access to the Events & Promotions Officer.
- 1.4 Work with established event venues across the district, such as Godwood to cross promote their calendars, capturing attendees before and after event their events encouraging them to visit more of the district.

### **Priority 2: Chichester District is a place that supports events**

Ensure the district has the correct support in place and the appropriate facilities and infrastructure to host events.

#### **Aims:**

- 2.1 Have a consistent approach to use of CDC land through the production of an 'Events Policy: Parks & Open Spaces'. The development of this document will help to

determine what events are suitable for a particular site as well as other factors including; frequency, size and scale, noise allowance etc. and subsequently these factors will determine the appropriate hire fee.

- 2.2 Provide support to enable event organisers to deliver safe and well managed events, with thorough pre-event communications and a robust SAG process.
- 2.3 Ensure current guidelines are fit for purpose, including events information on CDC website and information relating to events including hire of land, licenses, road closures, SAG's and Street Trading.
- 2.4 Evaluate what infrastructure is available to host events and if further infrastructure is required to help promote successful events. For example water and electricity supply to our event spaces.

### **Priority 3: Chichester District establishes a year round calendar of events**

Facilitate and support a district wide events calendar which enhances the district's tourism offer, profile and economy, working collaboratively with event, venue and tourism partners.

#### **Aims:**

- 3.1 As a district we will aim to host the following number of events from each of the category's summarised earlier in the strategy, the following are the targets for the next 5 years:
  - Headline – At least 1
  - Feature – 5-10
  - Town & City – 5-10
- 3.2 Work collaboratively with partners via Visit Chichester to determine future events, working closely with Visit Chichester to identify opportunities to develop new events to extend the tourism season.
- 3.3 Work with Visit Chichester to create a non-public facing events calendar that all partners can contribute to, to assist in identifying gaps and avoid potential date clashes.
- 3.4 Work with Visit Chichester to create a public facing 'go to' events calendar for the district.

### **Priority 4: Create a CDC managed events programme**

Introduce events created and managed by CDC, with the aim to create footfall and promote the businesses in the districts city and towns, celebrating the heritage and culture of the district, promote civic pride and provide entertainment for residents and visitors.

#### **Aims:**

- 4.1 Establish a series of CDC managed feature events throughout the district that complement the towns and city centres, working closely with local businesses, town councils and other partners.
- 4.2 Following on from the success of the Chichester Summer Street Party 2019 introduce the event model into the districts towns and establish an annual event.
- 4.3 Develop proposals for potential sponsors to fund CDC events.
- 4.4 Creation of a 'Destination Market' with various zones celebrating local producers and makers, with supplementary street food, children's activities and entertainment.
- 4.5 Development of markets within the district, having an agile approach to what markets there currently are and identifying the potential for new markets.

### **Reviewing Progress**

The strategy relies on working in partnership and building relationships with key partners across the district, including Visit Chichester, Chichester BID, Chichester City Council, Petworth, Midhurst and Selsey Town Councils, and all of the vision groups across the district.

An annual action plan will be developed by the Events & Promotions Officer, and progress in delivering the strategy will be reported through the city and towns visions.